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August 5, 1959



MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
August 5, 1959 -- 4:45 PM

Others present: Vice President Nixon
Secretary Dillon
Dr. Milton Eisenhower
General Persons
Mr. Hagerty
Mr. Morgan
Mr. Harlow
Mr. Kendall
Mr. Stephens
Major Eisenhower

The Vice President opened by offering advice for the President's forthcoming trip. He warned of the Russian policy of trying to physically wear out all visitors. He advised against going to Siberia, since facilities there are not sufficient to handle the press corps. Two or three days is enough in Moscow, and the President should get out of the city where the reception is warmer. The Vice President favors Leningrad and Kiev. He mentioned the great impact of the President's announcement of the exchange of visits, and the salutary effect of this announcement on his own trip. He feels that a delay in the President's plans will be good politically, since it will keep Khrushchev on good behavior for the interim.

The President said he plans to visit the Soviet Union for a short time only, since these trips are now becoming commonplace. He fears that the opportunity to learn much would be remote. He favors going to Kiev, Murmansk, Stalingrad or Kuybyshev. He said he may delay his trip almost to winter.

The Vice President went on to describe Khrushchev as a man with a closed mind, who will not be impressed with what he sees in America. The only approach which will be useful will be to give him a subtle feeling of the power and the will of America. He looks at everything through

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Communist glasses and believes what he says. Dr. Eisenhower said he thought the speech at Dnepropetrovsk was the softest, in which Khrushchev admitted the Soviet Union could be destroyed in a general war. He has a quick mind, and is good at polemics. He has a primitive approach, and is ignorant of everything outside the Soviet Bloc, although he does not recognize his ignorance. During the 6-1/2 hour luncheon, he repeated a determination that the wartime occupation as such of Berlin should be terminated. He recognizes the need to maintain Western dominance in West Berlin and might even place the corridors under West Germany. He is doggedly determined that East Berlin should stay in the Communist camp.

The Vice President said the only long-range answer to the Russian problem is a gradual opening of the door through contacts. People are hungry for news of the outside world. For example, the Vice President's own listening audience in Moscow was tremendous. Eight out of ten people in Moscow saw his speech by community use of television receivers. This speech he had, incidentally, made mild in order to permit future repetition. The President said that when he had the space, the invitation to accept 10,000 students from the USSR would have been the best idea in a long time. He asked Mr. Hagerty to check with our network heads, such as Sarnoff and Paley, to see if they would back him if he were to make a deal with Khrushchev. This deal would allow exchanges of one-half hour programs, in which each side, using its own interpreter, would broadcast to the other. These one-half hour programs might be shown in each country once a month (by use of film), on one TV and one radio network at a time. The Vice President advised giving Khrushchev maximum coverage to set the stage for insisting on reciprocity.

The discussion then turned to the forthcoming presentation which the Vice President would make to the nation on TV. It will be conducted early next week and will consist of a commentary on pictures taken by the press on the trip. The Vice President does not wish to get into issues and feels the trip has already been covered well. He plans no press conference.

The Vice President then said the most significant thing of the whole trip was the attitude of the people in Warsaw. Whereas the Soviet people

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were friendly, those in Warsaw were downright emotional. This, the Vice President feels, is the true Achilles Heel of the Soviet system. He said Warsaw has rebuilt amazingly. (He told a story of how he himself had reprimanded a guard who had been browbeating a friendly crowd in Sverdlovsk.) In contrast to Warsaw, the Soviet Union is oppressive and depressing. Dr. Eisenhower added that in spite of this atmosphere, he had been told that things have improved considerably in the Soviet Union. He went on to describe Gomulka as proud and tough, a match for Khrushchev. Gomulka prizes his independence and will not be pushed around by Khrushchev. The Vice President described Gomulka's distress over our press versions of aid to Poland. When we say that we are giving aid for the sole purpose of splitting Poland from their ally Russia, this forces Gomulka to take steps to deny this allegation. The President agreed that Gomulka may have a point.

In response to the President's question, the Vice President said he had asked by letter about the missing personnel on the C-130 crash of last September.

The President asked if any members of the party had returned to the exhibition on their second stop in Moscow. Dr. Eisenhower had, and found that about 65,000 people per day were going through. The dust problem had been solved by the laying of a blacktop surface. Some discussion followed on the Governors' comments on the exhibition. Governor Collins had said the exhibition failed to show a cross section of the U.S. All agreed that such would be impossible. Mr. Dillon said that the view of Governor Collins was not shared by all the others. Dr. Eisenhower said he thought the exhibition was good, but was a little

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neglectful of agriculture, religion and education. The cyclorama and the seven-screen exhibit showing our daily life were his favorites.

The President said the Governors had complained that we stress nail polish and cosmetics too much. The Vice President disagreed, saying the Governors must realize the drabness of life in the Soviet Union. Dr. Eisenhower said the result of the first day's voting, in which we had utilized a voting machine as part of the exhibit, indicated 340 thought the exhibition excellent, 300 thought it good, 300 thought it fair, and very few thought it poor.

The Vice President then went back to the personality of Khrushchev and described his penchant for lighthearted needling, even in making toasts. In contrast, however, he never raised his voice for 6-1/2 hours at his luncheon. He did, however, speak in deadly earnest. The ladies were ignored. The President said he himself would not engage in public debate; rather, he would go on TV before Khrushchev leaves, if Khrushchev, by objectionable statements, makes this necessary.

The conversation then turned to the procedures for handling Khrushchev's visit. The Vice President said normal handling for distinguished visitors will not work when Khrushchev visits the U.S. Khrushchev will have a great entourage. His trip should be managed by someone experienced in running political campaigns. Khrushchev had complained that Mikoyan and Kozlov had spent too much time with industrialists. The President said we should keep him away from the sponsorship of the Henry Fords, even if it may be necessary for the Federal Government to pay the expenses of the entire trip.

The Vice President recommended, in view of the risk inherent in sending Khrushchev to New York, that he come to Washington as a first stop, landing at either Friendship or National Airport. The President said it had been suggested that Abilene be one of the stops of Khrushchev's trip so that he can see where the President actually worked. In this case he could land at Smoky Hill Air Base, and use a helicopter to view the farms of the region on the way. The President noted this trip would be

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just before the corn harvest. He also mentioned the possibility of Khrushchev's visiting Yankton, South Dakota, which has been called the typical American town, and has the advantage of a mayor anxious to show it off. If such were done, it probably would take the place of Abilene. The Vice President thought it would be worthwhile for Khrushchev to see these farm areas and to see labor leaders, such as Walter Reuther. He also suggested a trip to Los Angeles in order to give Khrushchev a chance to fly over in a helicopter and to see vast numbers of houses such as portrayed in the Moscow exhibit. The Vice President placed emphasis on factories and power. The President mentioned Levittown, Pennsylvania, which is built strictly for the workers.

The President then asked Mr. Dillon how he planned to organize Khrushchev's trip. He realized that Mr. Murphy would be overseeing this visit from the political side, but is uncertain as to who would run the logistics. He had in mind particularly advance men such as ran his 1952 Presidential campaign. He thought that Dr. Eisenhower might be useful as a guide. Mr. Dillon said he is aware of no one in State who is capable of running a big show. Mr. Stephens said he can call on any one of five men at any time. General Persons mentioned Lon Hall.

Dr. Eisenhower then recommended that Camp David be utilized on the Khrushchev visit. He said that someone had already mentioned Camp David to Khrushchev, and he likes the idea. Dr. Eisenhower called attention to Khrushchev's penchant for his own dasha. The Vice President backed up Dr. Eisenhower on the idea of Camp David. He warned that the President must figure on one discussion spanning a full day, at least three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening. He recommended maximum discussion with Khrushchev on the part of the other people prior to his discussion with the President, in order to ferret out his main points in advance. He reiterated his warning that Khrushchev would try to wear anyone down who talks to him. As to social matters, the Vice President recommended stag events in business suits since Khrushchev, by principle, eschews tuxedos. The women are accustomed to being entertained separately.

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Dr. Eisenhower noted the museums, the university and the comic opera which he had seen in Moscow. He recommended consideration of an exhibit in the U.S. based on the Moscow permanent exhibit of all the republics of the USSR. He recommended that the President see this site when he visits Moscow.

The President said that in Washington, Khrushchev might be shown a few sites, such as the Lincoln Memorial, and on the first evening, be given a stag dinner. He could be taken to Camp David in a helicopter and shown housing areas on Route 240. Apparently he will have to see our fleets of automobiles in order to believe them. The Vice President said to expect Kozlov and Mikoyan to accompany Khrushchev. He uses them to spell him in long debates. He recommends Akalovski as U.S. interpreter.

The President instructed that Mr. Murphy put together a group to plan this trip. It should be worked out in great detail, recognizing that the U.S. Government may have to pay for the entire thing. He considers this unlikely, however, since many mayors and governors have invited Khrushchev to visit them. The Vice President recommended keeping the schedule light and warned that Khrushchev is rarely bound by the schedule. He felt it would be improper to act himself as host since he had not done so with any other head of State. He reiterated his recommendation to give Khrushchev the greatest exposure possible and said it would hurt him in the long run. He observed that the Russians often attack in our long suits and make issues of subjects damaging to themselves, such as the captive nations.

Dr. Eisenhower recommended that the President see Khrushchev at the end of his trip. This will serve to keep him on good behavior while he is traveling through the country.

The President inquired as to the security in Moscow. The Vice President said:

The Vice President finished his presentation by making two points:

1. It will save the President time and energy if he will avoid Khrushchev's efforts to philosophize, to discuss military strength, and to compare economic systems. If the President sticks to business, Khrushchev will, in the long run, like it.

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2. As to Khrushchev's health, he is not a sick man. He has been driving himself unmercifully, and when in Poland, "ran out of gas." He lacks the stamina he once had, and for this reason, may desire to get down to cases while discussing issues with the President.

The President concluded by requesting the Vice President to report to the Cabinet on his trip.

John S. D. Eisenhower

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